Dhakaiya Kutti language

Dhakaiya Kutti (Bengali: ঢাকাইয়া কুট্টি, romanized: *Dhakaiya Kutti*, lit. 'Dhakaiya of the rice-huskers'), also known as **Old Dhakaiya** (Bengali: পুরান ঢাকাইয়া, romanized: *Purān Dhākāiyā*) or simply **Dhakaiya**, is an Indo-Aryan language, spoken by the original Dhakaiyas of Old Dhaka in Bangladesh. This language is largely intelligible with Standard Bengali but has some differences in vocabulary. It is not used in formal settings anymore although historically the local Bais and Bara panchayets are said to have used it sometimes.[1][2] Usage of the language is in decline as many families are opting to raise their children to speak in Standard Bengali due to it being the official medium in the country and the influence of Dhaka city as the capital, welcoming migrants from all over the country who are not familiar with their dialect.[3]

Dhakaiya Kutti	
Old Dhakaiya	
ঢাকাইয়া কুট্টি পুরাণ ঢাকাইয়া (Puran Dhakaiya)	
Native to	Bangladesh
Region	Old Dhaka
Language family	Indo-European ▪ Indo Iranian ▪ Indo Aryan ▪ Eastern Zone ▪ Bengali-Assamese ▪ **Dhakaiya Kutti**
Writing system	Bengali alphabet
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	–
Glottolog	*None*

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Features

The dialect is an Eastern Bengali-based Creole language with a large amount of Persian and Arabic vocabulary. It has only a few aspirated sounds in comparison to Standard Bengali. [gʰ], [tʃʰ], [ɖʰ], [bʰ] sounds are not available in this language.[4] The use of double sounds in certain words are also quite common. The word for younger brother-in-law, *shala* (শালা) in Standard Bengali and *hala* (হালা) in Dhakaiya and other Eastern dialects, is seen as offensive in almost all Bengali dialects except in the Dhakaiya dialect this is a common and inoffensive word which can be applied to teachers, parents and animals.[5]

English	Standard Bengali	Dhakaiya Kutti
Boy	Chhele (ছেলে)	Pola (পোলা)
Girl	Meye (মেয়ে)	Maiya (মাইয়া)
Youngsters	Chhele Meye (ছেলে মেয়ে)	Polapain (পোলাপাইন)
True	Shotti (সত্তি)	Hacha (হাছা)
Why	Keno (কেন)	Kela (ক্যালা)
How	Kemon (কেমন)	Kemte (কেমতে)
Listen	Shon (শোন)	Hun (হুন)
After drinking tea	Cha kheye (চা খেয়ে)	Cha khaiya (চা খাইয়া)
you'll go with me?	amar shonge jaben naki? (আমার সঙ্গে যাবেন নাকি?)	amar loge zaiben niki (আমার লগে জাইবেন নিকি?)[5]
From	theke (থেকে)	thon (থন)[5]
Banana	kola (কলা)	kolla (কল্লা)[5]
Gourd/pumpkin	lau/kodu (লাউ/কদু)	koddu (কদ্দু)[5]
But	kintu (কিন্তু)	mogor (মগর), *magar* - from Persian[5]
Me too	amio (আমিও)	ami bi (আমি বি) *bhi* - from Hindustani[5]
All	shob (সব)	sob (সব/ছব)[5]
I see	dekhi (দেখি)	dehi (দেহি)[5]
Going (perfect participle)	giye (গিয়ে)	zaiya (যাইয়া)[5]
I'm going (present continuous)	jacchi (যাচ্ছি)	jaitechhi (যাইতেছি)
I will do	korbo (করবো)	kormu (করমু)

History

The Rajoshik sculpture, in front of the InterContinental Dhaka, displays a horse carriage that was once common in the city.

During the Mughal era, the Bengal Subah was famous for rice cultivation and the city of Jahangirnagar (now Dhaka) was the province's capital. Rice was a very important export product in the mid-eighteenth century, centred in Dhaka. The merchants who exported the rice were predominantly of Marwari and Central Indian descent. These merchants would go to different areas in Eastern Bengal and collect the rice. The rice was first needed to be cleaned up using dhekis before packaging, and this process is called *kuta* (কুটা) in Bengali. Many local rice cultivators were employed to do this. They would come from various parts of Bengal to Dhaka to complete this job, and as it was long and tiring to get there and do the job, many of them started living in Dhaka. This migration took place circa 1760. However, not all were involved in the rice trade. The presence of the Mughals in Dhaka meant that there was generally a lot more employment opportunities there and so they took other occupations such as *khansamah*s, footsoldiers, guards, chefs and chauffeurs for the Dhakaiya Urdu-speaking Nawabs of Dhaka and other aristocratic families.[6][7] These groups of people lived together and engaged in conversations and

addas with their Hindustani counterparts and their main occupation led them to be known as *kutti*s. The interactions with different cultures and languages led to the birth of the Kutti language.[8] The Bais panchayets of Dhaka in the twentieth-century used to converse in either Dhakaiya Urdu or Dhakaiya Kutti.[2] Eventually, the common people living in the localities of Old Dhaka, Kutti or not, used to speak in this dialect.[9]

Presently, the Kutti speakers are a minority in Dhaka following the mass migration of Bengalis from districts all over Bengal during the first and second partitions during the British colonial period. The new educated migrant community (now also commonly known as Dhakaiyas with the former now being referred to as "Old Dhakaiyas") spoke in Standard Bengali (Bengali: শুদ্ধ বাংলা, romanized: *Shuddho Bangla*), a standardised dialect of Bengali established by the British. Some of the Old Dhakaiya community began to see the new migrant community as their opponents due to these linguistic and cultural differences. This division was the source of modern troubles in the identities of the Old Dhakaiyas (who view themselves as original inhabitants) and the post-partition migrant community (who currently form the majority in the city).[3]

Literature and media

There has been literature written in the Dhakaiya dialect. One popular poem is "Channi-poshor Raiter Lour" (চান্নিপশর রাইতের লৌড়) by Jewel Mazhar.[10] Dhakaiya natoks are popular throughout the country and even the Indian filmmaker, Satyajit Ray, has written dialogues in this dialect.[11] The Dhakaiya Kutti folk are renowned for "Kutti Jokes" and the dialect's humourous aspect in general; generally consisting of short stories in which Dhakaiyas mess around with the bhadralok gentry.[12] It is considered to be one of the wittiest Bengali dialects.[13] Generally referred to as "Dhakaiya" folk, they call outsiders or non-Dhakaiya Bengalis by the name "Gaiya" (গাঁইয়া), meaning *from the village*,[14] and Kolkatans in particular as *Demchi* (ডেমচি).[15]

Further reading

- Bhuiyan, Mosarrof Hossain *ঢাকাইয়া কুট্টি ভাষার অবিধান - Dictionary of words in Bengali dialect spoken in Dhaka City, popularly known as Dhakaiya Kutti Dialect.* (Oitijjhya, 2015)

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